

Northwest Oregon and Washington's most complete and accurate fishing forecast

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 4th, – August 10th, 2006**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Summer steelhead action remains best at the mouth of the Cowlitz reports **Pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)** where water temperatures are much more tolerable than the Columbia- at 70 degrees. Most of the action is taking place using small plugs and spinners and effort is increasing. Gorge anglers are taking some fish but most steelhead are anxious to bypass Bonneville Dam in search of cooler water temperatures.

Pro guide Jack Glass (503-666-5370) has this report: "Columbia Walleye fishing is fair from Bonneville down to I-5. Trolling spinner and worm harness are producing, and most fish are taken from 20 25 feet of water."

Oversized sturgeon remain a better option now that the sanctuary above Marker 85 has opened up. Catches are good for the few participating in this fishery. Most sturgeon anglers will wait until consumptive opportunity exists again beginning October 1st.

Spring Chinook and summer steelhead counts declined to zero late last month with the water temperature at Willamette Falls reaching 80 degrees on July 29th. The water temp was down to 76 degrees as of the last day of the month.

Effort on the low, clear waters of the Clackamas are nearly non-existent as are the catch rates here.

Sandy River steelheaders are having little success in the milky water. A few boats are fishing the mouth but hookups are rare.

Summer steelheading is fair to good on the McKenzie River downstream from Leaburg Dam.

Try tiny baits and lures to tempt the numerous but finicky steelhead on the North Santiam. Fishing is fair on the South Santiam with 5,600 springers and 2,750 steelhead counted at Foster Dam as of July 28th.

Northwest – The Buoy 10 fishery started as most had anticipated. Success was low and likely will remain that way for another 2 weeks. The older classes of Chinook will begin to show the soonest but they will be a rare catch until mid-month. With coho numbers predicted to be down from last year, catchable numbers will also have to wait until mid-month.

Ocean salmon action has been sporadic although limits are becoming more common. Fish are being taken both north and south of the Columbia River entrance. Coho still make up the bulk of the catch but Chinook should start showing in higher numbers soon. In the ocean, the daily bag for Chinook increases to a possible 2 along with a 7-day per week season beginning August 11th. It will remain at 2 salmon per day, of which one may be a Chinook in the Buoy 10 fishery.

Catch and release sturgeon fishing in the estuary remains excellent but few are taking advantage. Sand shrimp is producing the best catches.

Crabbing remains fair at best in the lower Columbia.

Nehalem Bay is starting to show some promise and numbers should be increasing into this month.

Target Chinook closer to Wheeler on the larger tide series and at the jaws in the softer tides. Herring works best closer to the ocean but switch to hardware the further into tidewater that you fish.

Chinook fishing remains open in the ocean but they are more challenging to target. A combination crabbing trip would make the effort worthwhile when seas are friendly. Check regulations as they may still challenge anglers depending on what area of the ocean you choose to fish. Coho fishing closed on July 1st.

The Nestucca is still kicking out a few steelhead but it remains at summer low levels reports **Pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5601)**.

Tuna are being taken out of Depoe Bay, but this can be a long run to find water over 60 degrees. Chinook are being caught much closer to port.

Newport was the top producer for offshore coho anglers on the week ending July 23rd according to the ODFW. Over 1,400 of the 2,400 caught coast-wide during that period were by anglers launching out of Yaquina Bay. Winchester Bay was tops for Chinook with 151 returned to port. Over 2,500 Chinook have been taken out of Windy Bay this year.

Crabbing is good in Yaquina Bay but limits of jumbo Dungeness are easy just outside. Dungeness are not in prime condition at this time of year but are running large.

Southwest – Chinook fishing has remained fair to good out of Winchester Bay for trollers fishing 30 to 35 feet deep over 325 to 340 feet of water. Chinook are also being caught regularly in the bay below the 101 Bridge trolling plug-cut herring.

Bottomfishing offshore remains excellent although lingcod catches have declined. Recreational ocean crabbing closes August 15th but crabbing in South coast bays is improving. Surfperch fishing remains good.

Chinook over 30 pounds are being taken daily from the Rogue River at Gold Beach. Late last week, a pod of salmon boosted catches and raised optimism about this years Fall run. Fishing should remain decent over the weekend but will likely slow into next week. Two Chinook per day, fin clipped or not, may be taken on the Rogue below Hog Creek. Section 5 of the Rogue River will be planted with trout.

Just over 45% of the ocean coho quota for Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain had been taken as of July 30th. A segment of this coastline will reopen from September 1st – 6th for hatchery coho.

Southwest Washington- The Kalama, North Fork Lewis and White Salmon Rivers are producing some catches of summer steelhead. The Klickitat remains turbid from flows originating from Big Muddy Creek. The Cowlitz River remains the best bet for steelhead in the area.

Drano Lake trollers are averaging over a half of steelhead per rod with 64% of the fish landed of hatchery origin.

Eastern - Deschutes River anglers are finding summer steelhead to be challenging. Temperatures have cooled but winds are hampering success. Side-planning plugs has been most effective below Mac's Canyon and anglers are taking a few fish at the mouth. Smallmouth bass have invaded the Deschutes River in higher numbers than previously seen.

Caddis flies are hatching and the trout are keyed on them on the lower Deschutes.

Soapbox Update – Letter to ODFW Commissioners:

The Northwest Guides & Anglers Association

To protect, enhance, and promote healthy sport fisheries and the ecosystems they depend on in the Pacific Northwest.

ODF&W Commission

Re: Proposed commercial bubble fisheries

Chair Rae and Commissioners:

Upon considering the proposal for expanded ocean opportunity for the commercial troll fisheries in the bubble areas along the Oregon coast, we urge you to consider the possible ramifications of such a proposal not having adequate data to support this fishery. The NW Guides & Anglers Association does not support this proposal for these reasons:

- 1) As supported by the staff report, inadequate historical data indicates that “Potential catch in these terminal fisheries is largely unknown”. With no way to regulate effort and not knowing the level of participation in this fishery, **the possibility for over-harvest is very possible** .
- 2) State statute calls for the “equitable sharing” of catch between sport and commercial fishing fleets. Harvest of Chinook salmon in ocean fisheries is already grossly inequitable and this proposed fishery would further put it out of balance. These bubble fisheries are highly utilized by sport fishers and only accessible when safe ocean conditions exist. **It is a rare opportunity for sport anglers to take advantage of a highly successful target fishery for Chinook and we don’t want to see that opportunity compromised.**
- 3) Most importantly, run forecasts for coastal watersheds are highly volatile and the potential for mis-predictions is great. Couple this factor with warm freshwater temperatures and this additional harvest could lead us into another Klamath River crisis. **Until the agency gets quality controlled data on such a proposed fishery, the risk seems too great to risk the last remaining sustainable wild fish fishery on the north coast** . Sport anglers have already lost consumptive opportunity to 5 of the 6 wild salmonid stocks of fish on the north coast.

Please consider these points when reviewing the proposal for additional bubble fisheries for commercial fisheries in Oregon waters. Thank you for taking the time to read our concerns on this matter.

Bob Rees, President
NW Guides and Anglers Association

Columbia River Fishing Report – Summer steelhead action continues best from Rainier to the mouth of the Kalama River. With mainstem temperatures reaching 70 degrees or better, tributary fisheries are producing the best results. The Cowlitz, being one of the coolest in the lower Columbia, is producing the best results below Bonneville Dam. **Pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)** reports, "Fishing at the mouth of the Cowlitz has been good. There has been a consistent bite everyday with some days over 50 fish being hooked and landed. I have been catching 5-10 summer Steelhead per trip and averaging over 10 takedowns a day. We had 17 chances one day last week. I'm catching these fish on U-20 Flatfish and spinners. One of my favorite spinners is an all red size 5 spinner blade with red beads (the red bomber). Try adding scent to your lures when fishing here, this will improve your chances of hooking more fish." Effort is increasing at least until the salmon action heats up. Small spinners and plugs are taking the bulk of the fish.

Bonneville anglers are taking a few fish but steelhead seem focused on migrating upstream. Numbers are respectable at the lower impoundment but only about a tenth of those fish are passing The Dalles Dam. **Pro guide Jack Glass (503-666-5370)** has this report: "Columbia Walleye fishing is fair from Bonneville down to I-5. Trolling spinner and worm harness are producing, and most fish are taken from 20 25 feet of water. Steelhead and salmon has also been fair with steelhead numbers increasing over the next two weeks, things are looking up. Most fish caught on spinners or small flat fish. The water is 69 to 71 degrees so fish in 12 to 25 water."

Trollers at the mouth of the Deschutes are taking a few fish with the Michael Jackson plug producing consistent results.

Beach plunkers experienced fair results using mostly hot colored spin-n-glos on the minus tide series. Boat anglers in the estuary showed improved catches despite poor tides.

Oversized sturgeon remains an option and guides saw a jump in success rates with the re-opening of the sanctuary above Marker 85. Floater shad took good numbers of the large fish in the faster flows above Beacon Rock where wind can be negated with the aid of a sea anchor. Keeper fish were still mostly absent from the catches but anglers most likely won't target them until the catch and keep option opens again beginning October 1st.

Catch and release fishing in the estuary is excellent for the few anglers fishing. We witnessed schools of jumping sturgeon in the shallow water near Tongue Point and found these fish to be responsive to sand shrimp on the incoming tide. We landed nearly 40 fish that day (7/27) although most of the fish we landed were sub-legals.

Salmon fishing outside of the mouth of the Columbia remains sporadic but anglers willing to start early and grind it out are taking limits of mostly coho. Avid angler **Alex Paul** nailed a 10 fish limit on Sunday (7/30) fishing near Buoy 1 after low slack. The late start didn't seem to hinder their success. Seas have been dictating angler dedication. Chinook catches haven't increased significantly but that should change soon. Chinook limits liberalize and the days/week restriction lifts beginning August 11th.

The opening of the Buoy 10 fishery didn't impress many. Effort was down significantly from previous years as is the forecast for returning adults. Good numbers of Chinook are still expected to show but coho numbers are expected to be fewer than last year. Noteworthy however is the fact that southerly ports along the Oregon Coast fell far short of attaining their quotas leaving additional fish destined to return to the Columbia River. The bulk of these Columbia River coho are forecasted to be the earlier "A" run fish which contribute significantly to the Buoy 10 sport catch. October returning "B" run coho are forecasted to be less than 90,000 adults which will constrain fall commercial gillnet fisheries.

Crabbing has not improved in the lower Columbia and the razor clam closure has extended further south to Cape Perpetua south of Yachats.

The Guide's Forecast – Steelhead fishing should continue to improve this week- especially with the good tide series that begins on Sunday. Morning tides will favor beach plunkers into next week but steelhead will certainly continue to favor the cooler tributaries like the Cowlitz, Hood and Deschutes

River mouths. Small plugs and spinners will take the bulk of the fish.

Sturgeon anglers will continue to produce best in the gorge above Beacon Rock for oversized fish and the estuary near the Astoria/Megler Bridge for shakers and keeper sized fish. The entire Columbia is now closed to the retention of keeper sized sturgeon.

Ocean catches will continue to pick up for coho and Chinook salmon. The water both north and south should produce good catches but rough ocean conditions may make for hazardous bar crossings and uncomfortable ocean fishing conditions. Mornings will produce the best results. Target Chinook to the north.

The Buoy 10 fishery will not produce profound results this week but a few of the larger Chinook that come in earlier may make up for the lack of biters that will be present. Work with the cooler ocean tides when they influence in-river conditions. Bait usually produces best in the early season but hardware will certainly have application in the warmer water temperatures.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The 80-degree water temperature of the lower Willamette at the Falls on July 28th was an event with has not occurred for at least 15 years according to the ODFW. The lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel are closed for the retention of sturgeon. Catch and release is allowed. Only undersized fish were taken during the last retention July 27th through 29th.

The North Santiam has good numbers of steelhead available, but they're heading quickly upriver and slow to take bait or lure. As of August 1st, a total of 5,652 summers and 2,858 had returned to Foster Dam.

The Guide's Forecast – Although the temperature of the Willamette was down to 75 degrees on Tuesday, August 1st, the salmon and steelhead runs are over. With sturgeon closed for retention, catch and release would be a possibility but even shakers weren't cooperating last week. Bass fishermen are likely to have the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel all to themselves.

Fish early and late to intercept steelhead on the Santiams and do so on high on the river for the best chance of a hookup.

The McKenzie River will offer a fair shot at a steelhead in the coming week. Conventional tackle as well as fly gear will be effective here.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Steelheaders at McIver Park on the Clackamas have managed to hook an occasional steelhead, but fishing is so slow there's little interest. The spring Chinook fishery is over. A record of nearly 7,000 springers returned to the hatchery facility this year, but the 700 steelhead which have been recycled downstream to Riverside Park is below average.

Water temperatures are in the upper 60s. The color of the Sandy mid-week was perfect, but the fishing has not improved. The only reports of hookups are at the mouth where the Sandy, as warm as it is, remains slightly cooler than the Columbia.

North Coast District Fishing Report – With the closure of the ocean coho season out of Garibaldi, anglers are now focusing their efforts on Nehalem bay. Summer Chinook numbers should begin to increase this month although the catch thus far has not been significant with the exception of Wednesday last week. Sunday also produced results and 7 or 8 fish were reported at Wheeler Marina on 8/2.

Crabbing continues to improve in the Tillamook and Netarts estuaries. The ocean, although closed to the retention of coho, remains good for crabbers. Chinook opportunities still exist including bubble fisheries where regulations relaxed beginning August 1st. Check regulations for the areas you intend to fish.

Summer steelheading is best on the Nestucca River although low flows continue to make early morning the best option. Wilson River steelheaders are searching hard for fish. Small baits are producing best in the morning and hardware in the afternoon. Spring Chinook retention closed on July 31st. The Chinook are nearing the spawning phase so please reduce stress in the warm coastal waters. **Pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5601)** reports, "The Nestucca is at summer low conditions. There are summer steelhead available through the river. The best times is early morning and late evening. It is pretty much a wading show. However, if anyone feels the need to float it, there is a log across the river near Nestucca bend, so use caution. Crabbing in the bay has been great, and we are going again today. There are some soft ones in the mix, but most are beautiful ocean dwellers, and nice and full. There are some people fishing the Salmon River near HWY 101, but we cannot confirm any catches of coho or Chinook. We'll keep an eye open."

The Guide's Forecast – Nehalem Bay should be the best bet going on the north coast this week. Stronger tides will make Wheeler the productive place to fish but anglers working the jaws will have some opportunity when flows aren't so strong. Spinners will work best in upriver situations.

Chinook could begin staging at the entrances of Tillamook and Nehalem Bays but ocean forecasts will not be conducive to fun fishing on the big pond. It may be better to stick to estuary fishing this weekend. Tillamook Bay is open to Chinook fishing and crabbing makes a nice combination trip although extreme tides should make crabbers think twice when placing pots.

Summer steelheading will get more challenging as we enter August. Few fresh fish will be entering the Nestucca and Wilson Rivers and the fish that are present, shy away from offering the longer they remain in freshwater.

Central & South Coast Reports – The selective (fin clipped) ocean coho fishery closed from Cape Falcon (near Tillamook Head) South on July 31st with less than half of the quota taken. It looks like it'll stay closed with the exception of six days at the 1st of September South of Humburg Mountain.

Pro Guide Bill Kremers (541 754 6411) reports, "I was able to get out Saturday for coho trip out of Newport. We fished on the north end of the Rockpile. We limited out in coho in two hours trolling Coyote spoons and flashers. All the coho we caught were hatchery with biggest ones going about 10 lbs. Once we teamed up with Phil from Pro Cure and he was fishing deeper with down riggers and herring. He landed this thirty-five pounder. There a halibut season this Thursday thru Saturday, once again the [ocean] forecast is not good. Also the coho season will closes on July 31. This makes no sense at all, as we are not close to filling the quota and only in the last week or so have we had good fishing for decent size fish off of Newport."

Winchester Bay was the top port for Chinook in the week ending July 23rd with 151 returned to port. Over 2,500 Chinook have been taken out of Windy Bay this year. About one in three anglers trying for Chinook offshore are landing fish.

Look for the ODFW to authorize commercial efforts just outside the mouths of Nehalem, Tillamook, Nestucca, Yaquina, Alsea, Siuslaw, Umpqua, Coos, Elk, Rogue, and Chetco estuaries in September.

Chinook fishing remains fair to good out of Winchester Bay for trollers fishing 30 to 35 feet deep over 325 to 340 feet of water. Fall fish are also being caught regularly inside the bay below the 101 Bridge

by anglers trolling plug-cut herring. Shad continue to be taken around Sawyers Rapids as the run winds down on the Umpqua and fishing for oversized sturgeon below Reedsport is worthwhile with a keeper taking the bait occasionally. The smallmouth bass fishing in the mainstem above Scottsburg and in the South Umpqua is heating up. This legendary fishery is fodder for (true) fish stories regaling catches of 100-plus-fish per day.

Fall Chinook have been taken in the lower Coquille River and are starting to move into the Coos and Chetco estuaries.

Steelheading has been rewarding on the upper Rogue. Fly, bait and lure anglers are all reaping the rewards of a strong, early run. A total of 4,700 summer steelhead had been counted at Gold Ray Dam as of July 28th which is considered a very good number for this time of the year. Fishing for steelhead in the Grants Pass stretch is only fair, however. Perhaps the best news is the Fall Chinook run in the estuary which showed dramatic improvement starting Thursday, July 27th and has been producing steady catches since then. This is particularly gratifying to anglers following a poor spring Chinook run, the total count of which finally topped a lackluster 10,000 at Gold Ray Dam on July 28th.

Trollers in Rogue tidewater are catching Chinook ranging from the mid-20s to over 30 pounds. A few larger than 40 pounds have been checked at Jots, where anglers may collect buttons in recognition of catching a salmon over the 30-pound mark. The Rogue River Rig popularized here is the effective choice of most boaters. Two chinook of either wild or hatchery origin may be kept per day below Hog Creek.

Chinook kegged in the lower Rogue won't move upstream until the river temperature drops to 72 degrees or so. It's currently several degrees warmer than that. Flows are below normal and, according to the Army Corps of Engineers, will stay that way. The Corps forecast indicates that by the 1st of October, release from Lost Creek Dam will be the lowest in decades. This, contingent upon precipitation, may work to bay trollers' advantage as it should extend the productive estuary fishery.

Razor clamming is expected to be good at Myers Creek and Bailey beaches as we enter another series of morning minus tides starting Monday, August 7th and continuing through the week.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Early mornings have been productive on the lower Deschutes as trout devour spent caddises from the previous days' hatch. That hatch occurs in the evening, making dry caddis and pupae patterns effective.

Northwest Trout – Kokanee fishing is fair to good at Paulina with a few limits being taken. Lake Billy Chinook is also putting out decent numbers of good-sized kokos. No trout stocking is scheduled in the Willamette Zone this week. Planting in the Northwest Zone resumes in September.

Washington fishing reports:

Pro guide Brad Shride (206-463-9230 or 877-483-0047) reports:

Things got a bit better this past week in Area 11 Tacoma-Vashon Island for Kings and Silvers. We fished this past week 4 out of the seven days. Wednesday and Thursday we were on the Cowlitz River fishing for Steelhead.

Bait has been plentiful lately all around the Clay-banks, Pt Dalco, Slag Pile and along Owens Beach area. We kept our gear pretty simple this past week. A straight cut plug herring off the downrigger and a Green Hot-Spot flasher with a Green/White Coyote Spoon or a green Spatter Back Squid or a cut plug herring seemed to put these migrating Salmon into the boat. I like to tip my squid and Coyote Spoons with a little cured herring strip.

We trolled from first light at 25 feet, 35 feet, 55 feet to 90 feet and as the morning wore on and the light got brighter we dropped a rig or two all the way to the bottom. Only one fish this past week was caught below that 120 foot depth for us. I usually keep my gear pretty simple this time of the year so I fished a lot of just straight cut plug herring brined in my own secret sauce about 75 feet behind the downrigger ball. The brine I use includes rock salt and Mrs. Stewarts bluing but I cannot tell what the rest of the brine is. Try different scents to satisfy your own curiosity. Scent works! If you do not use scent on your plugs, lures, spoons flashers etc. then you are not giving yourself that full advantage.

Friday we managed to hook into some pretty nice fish. We lost one very nice King but managed to boat a King about 8 pounds and a Silver about 4 pounds. The King we lost was 30 feet on the downrigger in 140 feet of water just off the Slag Pile. The Silver was hooked on a flasher squid combo at about 60 feet in the same general area. The 8 pound feeder King was caught on a straight cut plug herring at Owens beach in 150 feet of water at 90 feet on the downrigger. All of Fridays fish were caught before 9:00 AM.

Saturday we hit a King just off the Slag Pile in about 110 feet of water with the Downrigger set at 25 feet. At 5:30 in the morning on a straight cut plug herring we hit a very nice King. Mike was the lucky fisherman. When Mike saw the rod pull off the downrigger he jumped for it and the fight was on. This King went straight for the bottom so I knew it was a nice fish. When this King came to the surface and rolled over and I saw his tail I knew it was a big fish. Three times he came up and then went back to the deep. We finally netted it with high fives and a lot of WOW"s. Way to go Mike! This is the biggest I have heard of this year so far and the biggest checked that we know of. As in the picture this migrating King was officially weighed in at the Boathouse Marina and tipped the scales at 29 pounds 9 ounces. We had another fish on just after that with the Hot Spot flasher Squid combo in the same area and down 67 feet on the rigger. Turned out to be a nice 4 pound Silver. Just after that we managed a 7 pound feeder King on the Flasher Squid combo again. One more bite after that and then nothing. All these fish hit first thing in the morning just after daylight until about 7:00 AM. After that it was over.

Sunday was about the same scenario but not quite as lucrative for us but there was an early morning bite just the same. We managed a very nice 11 pound King in the same area this morning on a straight cut plug herring down about 54 feet on the downrigger in 130 feet of water at the Slag Pile. Nice fish! This was Jim Griswold the father of my wife Amy from Vashon Island. It all happened from first light to about 7:00 AM. Bite over! Get out there early especially with early morning tide as you double your chances.

Monday was the same, two fish, one 5 pound Silver at 65 feet and one 10 pound King in 70 feet along Owens Beach and the Slag Pile trolling shallow in the morning and deeper as the morning wears on. Same set up was the Flasher combo and straight cut plug herring.

Pinch your barbs, try to be courteous to others with the crowds out now and give the guy some room if he has a fish on. Stick to the rules. This fishery is for all of us so please do your part. Start early as the more successful fisherman start at 4:45 AM or daylight and some are done as you are just getting out. Keep your bait fresh, check and change your baits often because we are seeing a ton of little shakers out there right now. The Silvers in our area along the Slag Pile and Owens Beach seem to be deeper all the way to 90 feet. I check and change only one rod at a time. I try different depths and stay in the area of the bait if you can. Most of these fish are traveling/migrating fish and are not bottom dwellers as Blackmouth are. Good luck and see you on the water.

From the WDF&W Weekender Report:

[North Puget Sound](#)

Anglers will have a chance to catch some **sockeye** salmon on Lake Washington after all. An unexpected three-day recreational fishery for sockeye in the lake is set to begin July 29, and last through July 31.

After a couple weeks of higher-than-anticipated sockeye counts at the Ballard Locks, state and tribal salmon co-managers agreed to update the strength of the Lake Washington sockeye run to about 411,000 salmon. The new sockeye projection, which includes expected returns through August, is well above the spawning escapement goal of 350,000 salmon.

"This summer's sockeye return to Lake Washington is larger than anticipated and strong enough to allow for an exciting recreational fishery," said Tim Flint, WDFW salmon resource manager. "This is a one-of-a-kind fishery."

Fishing will be allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. The daily limit is two sockeye, measuring at least 15 inches. All other salmon must be immediately released unharmed. No fishing will be allowed within 100 yards of the floating bridges. Waters within 1,000 feet of the mouth of the Cedar River in Renton also will be closed to all fishing.

Anglers must carry a freshwater or combination fishing license and salmon catch record card. Any salmon that is not released must be immediately recorded on the catch record card. Under freshwater fishing rules, anglers may only fish with one rod and must stop fishing once they have reached their personal daily limit.

Elsewhere in the region, anglers only have a few days left to hook a sockeye on the Baker River. That fishery, which is open from the mouth of the river to the Highway 20 Bridge at Concrete, wraps up July 31. The daily limit is two sockeye at least 12 inches in length.

On the Skykomish River, the **spring chinook** fishery also remains open through the end of July. The Sky is open from the Lewis Street Bridge in Monroe to the Wallace River, and has a daily limit of two hatchery chinook at least 12 inches in length.

On the saltwater, resident **coho** fishing is good from Edmonds down to Tacoma, said Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound recreational salmon manager for WDFW. "Anglers are catching a good number of 2- to 5-pound coho in Marine Area 10, especially near Jefferson Head and in the Elliott Bay fishery," Thiesfeld said.

Recent creel checks at the Shilshole and Armeni boat ramps give some indication of angler success. On July 21, 384 anglers checked 39 coho at Armeni, while 130 anglers accounted for 37 coho at Shilshole. The following day, 379 anglers brought home 35 coho at Armeni, and 120 anglers checked 96 coho at the Shilshole ramp.

The **chinook** bite in Elliott Bay also is decent, said Thiesfeld. "Overall, the start of the salmon fishery in Elliott Bay is going well," he said. "It's much better than last year, which was a pretty down year."

The Inner Elliott Bay fishery is open Friday through Sunday each week with a two-salmon daily limit. Anglers fishing outside of the Elliott Bay fishery in Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) have a daily limit of two salmon, with no minimum size limit, and must release chinook salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, anglers fishing in Marine Area 10, including the Elliott Bay and Sinclair Inlet fisheries, must release chum salmon.

The Tulalip Bay "bubble" salmon fishery continues to be slow. Checks at the Everett Ramp showed 127 anglers with only four chinook July 21, and 272 anglers brought home 12 chinook the following day. "This is usually when the bubble hits its stride, but it has yet to heat up," Thiesfeld said. "We hope it picks up soon."

Anglers fishing the Tulalip bubble are reminded that the fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday and runs through Sept. 25. There is a two-salmon daily limit and anglers must release any chinook measuring less than 22 inches.

Another option is Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), where anglers have hooked a few chinook. On July 21, fish checks at the Coronet Bay public ramp showed 17 anglers hauled in four chinook, while 69 anglers checked in nine chinook the following day. Anglers have a daily limit of two salmon, and can only keep one chinook, which must measure at least 22 inches in length. Beginning Aug. 1, anglers in Marine Area 7 must release wild coho and chum salmon.

Marine Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet) also is open for salmon, and beginning Aug. 1, fishing opportunities in the region will increase when marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open.

Before heading out, anglers are encouraged to check out the regulations for each fishery in WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Instead of dropping a hook, drop a pot. **Crab** fishing is open in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10 and the southern and eastern portions of Marine Area 7 Wednesday through Saturday each week. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

To participate in the fishery, all crabbers age 15 or older must obtain and carry a current Washington fishing license. In addition, all crab fishers - regardless of age - must obtain and carry a catch record card and a crab licensing endorsement to fish for crab in Puget Sound. The crab endorsement costs \$3 for crabbers age 15 and over, but is free to fishers under age 15.

The **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** fishery also remains open throughout the region, and shrimpers can drop a pot in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, the northern and central portions of area 7 and a portion of area 9. Details on the fishery, such as the required minimum mesh size and maximum fishing depths, are available on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/>.

Fishing for **trout** at numerous lakes, rivers and streams also remains a possibility for anglers throughout the region. For more rules and details on the trout fishery and other freshwater fisheries, anglers should check WDFW's *006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

[South Sound/Olympic Peninsula](#)

Salmon fishing off the Pacific coast is picking up, according to Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist, who noted that the quality and size of the fish continue to be top rate. And beginning Aug. 11, salmon fishing on the coast will open seven days a week and anglers will be allowed to keep two chinook as part of the two-fish daily limit.

During the week of July 17, charters fishing out of Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) posted some of the best catch rates on the coast, averaging 1.5 salmon per angler. Private boats scored about one fish per angler, mostly coho. Charter boats fishing out of Westport (Marine Area 2) caught fewer salmon - just under one per rod - but more than half of those fish were chinook. Both areas are open on a Sunday-through-Thursday schedule until Aug. 11, when they switch to seven days per week.

Anglers fishing out of LaPush (Marine Area 3) and Neah Bay (Marine Area 4) also averaged about one fish per rod, mostly coho. Those areas will be open Tuesday through Saturday until Aug. 11, when the fishery opens seven days per week.

The coho are good size for this time of year, averaging six to seven pounds, said Beeghley, noting that "it's typical for them to grow a pound or two a week now." The derby winner in Westport on July 24 was 29 pounds, "but I've seen even bigger ones than that," she said.

Catch rates for salmon are also improving in Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "The action has definitely picked up, and right on

schedule," he said. For instance, at Point Defiance Boathouse, a WDFW creel check on July 19 measured a catch rate of one fish for every two rods. The next day, it was about one chinook for every 1.4 rods. At Narrows Marina on July 23, anglers were reeling in a chinook every 1.8 rods. Fishing in Marine Area 11 is open daily. Commencement Bay remains closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 12.

Salmon fishing is also open in marine areas 10 (Bremerton), 12 (Hood Canal, south of Ayock Point only), 13 (South Puget Sound), 5 (Sekiu/Pillar Point), and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) on a daily basis, with a daily limit of two salmon. Chinook release is required in marine areas 5, 6, and 10, except marked, hatchery chinook may be retained west of Ediz Hook. Chinook also may be retained in Sinclair Inlet. Fishing has been fair on Hood Canal, said Thiesfeld, but has slowed down in the South Sound and the Strait.

Anglers will get another chance to catch **halibut** starting Aug. 4, when Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) opens for Pacific halibut fishing three days per week - Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Fisheries managers determined there were enough fish to re-open the fishery for one weekend. After a catch estimate, they will announce whether the fishery will open for a second weekend in August. The WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/halibut/index.htm>) and recreational fishing hotline (360-902-2500) will be updated with the new season information as soon as it is available.

Or how about a big, meaty **tuna**? Anglers fishing 40 to 50 miles offshore from Ilwaco have been reeling in lots of them, according to Wendy Beeghley. "That's actually pretty close in for tuna fishing," said Beeghley, who heard of one charter that averaged 14 fish per person, and private boats getting 10 fish for every two-to-three people. There is no bag limit for tuna, which can really fill up the dinner table. "They average 14-15 pounds and that's almost all meat," said Beeghley.

With temperatures breaking heat records in some parts of the region, anglers can generally improve their odds by moving from lakes to streams, said Hal Michael, WDFW fish biologist. "Even the so called 'warm-water fish' don't like this weather," he said. "People are fishing deeper. Going out in the very early morning and late evenings is best." But given it's a hot time of year, anglers should consider heading for cooler areas, higher elevations and moving waters. Michaels noted, for example, that he's heard the slower moving sections of the Chehalis River have been producing good numbers of **smallmouth bass** and **rock bass**.

Weather shouldn't be an issue for the youngsters lining up to reel in a jumbo rainbow trout at the Kids Fishing Pond at the Thurston County Fair Aug. 2-6. The WDFW pond will be set up inside a big tent for catch-and-release from noon-2:30 and 4:00-6:00 each day. Anglers age 14 and under can participate.

Crab fishing is open seven days per week in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) through Feb. 28. Most other areas of Puget Sound are open for crab fishing Wednesdays through Saturdays, including marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal). In addition, these areas will be open the entire Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2-4, before closing for a catch assessment. Fishing will resume in areas where the catch quota has not been met, on dates to be announced by WDFW.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five male Dungeness crab with a shell width measuring at least 6¼ inches, plus six red rock crab of either sex with a shell width of at least 5 inches. All undersized crab, female Dungeness crab and all softshell crab of either sex must be returned to the water.

To participate in the fishery, all crab fishers age 15 or older must obtain and carry a current Washington fishing license. In addition, all crabbers - regardless of age - must obtain and carry a catch record card and a crab licensing endorsement to fish for crab in Puget Sound.

Those fishing in Hood Canal are also asked to report any Dungeness crab bearing a bright green tag on the underside of their shell. Sport or tribal fishers who catch a crab bearing the distinctive green tag are

asked to call the department toll free at 866-859-8439 and report the tag number along with the date, location, and depth of capture. More information on crab fishing is available on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>.

Southwest Washington:

The popular Buoy 10 **salmon** fishery opens Aug. 1, when new salmon-fishing rules also take effect in many other areas of the Columbia River and its tributaries. Some of those regulations are more restrictive, others less, so anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) before casting a line.

While the Buoy 10 salmon fishery usually doesn't peak until late August, it can produce some nice fish right from the get-go, said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "If conditions are right, anglers can hook up with some adult chinook and ocean-sized coho right from the start," Hymer said. "It's tailor-made for salmon anglers with boats that are too small for ocean fishing."

The fishery, which extends from Buoy 10 at the mouth of the Columbia to the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line east of Astoria, will be open seven days per week. The daily limit is two salmon, only one of which can be a chinook, from Aug. 1 through Oct. 31. Anglers can keep any chinook - fin-clipped or not - so long as it is at least 24 inches long. They can also retain any adipose-clipped coho measuring at least 16 inches, but must release any wild coho, sockeye or chum they catch.

The Buoy 10 fishery also has other attractions. Barbed hooks are allowed, and anglers may fish with either a saltwater, freshwater or combination license. "Party fishing" rules will be in effect, allowing all anglers aboard a boat to fish until the daily limit for all licensed and juvenile fishers aboard has been reached. And regulations allow jigging for anchovies and other baitfish, using up to three treble hooks or nine single-point hooks, not to exceed 3/8 inches between the point and shank.

Shore-bound anglers also have some options. Fishing off the North Jetty, where anglers can cast in either direction, is open seven days per week when the fishery for either Buoy 10 or Marine Area 1 is open. Barbed hooks are allowed, and the daily limit and size restrictions follow the most liberal regulation in either area.

Last year, anglers caught 9,223 chinook and 6,878 hatchery coho by the time the Buoy 10 fishery closed Dec. 31. This year's fishery is expected to be similar, except with fewer chinook and more coho predicted, Hymer said. "But we'll have a better idea once the fishery is up and running," he said.

On the same day the Buoy 10 fishery gets under way, fishing rules will change on several other areas of the Columbia and its tributaries. Changes effective Aug. 1 include:

No more than one adult chinook salmon - clipped or unclipped - as part of the daily bag limit for anglers fishing the mainstem Columbia River upstream to Bonneville Dam. Two adult chinook - clipped or unclipped - may be retained in the Deep, Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis (including the North Fork), Green, Toutle (including the North Fork), Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, and in Drano Lake.

Night closures and non-buoyant lure restrictions on the Columbia mainstem from Bonneville Dam to The Dalles Dam. Non-buoyant lure restrictions also will be in effect on sections of the Wind, White Salmon and Klickitat Rivers as well as Drano Lake.

A requirement to release wild, unmarked coho from mouth of the Columbia upriver to the Hood River Bridge and on many of the tributaries noted above. For a river-by-river listing of regulation changes effective Aug. 1, see the *Fishing in Washington* rule pamphlet.

Closure of the hatchery spring chinook season on the Grays and Elochoman rivers. The last day of spring chinook fishing on those rivers is July 31.

While anglers are still picking up some summer chinook below Bonneville Dam, catch rates have been best for **hatchery steelhead**. During the week of July 17, boat anglers fishing from the mouth of the Cowlitz River downstream averaged one steelhead for every three rods. The Cowlitz, itself, is still the best-producing tributary for steelhead, but those feeding the Bonneville Pool should start heating up as the Columbia mainstem continues to get warmer, Hymer said.

Meanwhile, anglers hoping to take home a **sturgeon** from the lower Columbia are running out of time. The fishery from the Wauna power lines upstream to Marker 85 is currently open to sturgeon retention Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, but switches to catch-and-release upstream to Bonneville Dam Aug. 1. It will next open to sturgeon retention Oct. 5. Catch-and-keep sturgeon fisheries below the power lines and in the Bonneville Pool are closed for the year.

As recent thermometer readings would suggest, this is high season for warm water fish. Boat anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool have been averaging nine **bass** per rod. Those fishing The Dalles Pool have been averaging three **walleye** per rod, and those fishing the John Day Pool have been scoring and average of six bass and one walleye per rod.

Bank anglers have also been reeling in some **landlocked salmon** at Riffe Lake behind Mossyrock Dam. A recent creel check found that 12 anglers had caught 16 coho and nine chinook. They released nine of the coho and all but one of the chinook.

[Eastern Washington:](#)

Summer heat is forcing anglers higher and fish deeper. The north end of the region includes many small, deep lakes at higher elevation with somewhat cooler air temperatures that make for more comfortable fishing. "But you still need to fish very early in the day or late in the evening," said WDFW District Fish Biologist Curt Vail. "The water is still warm and fish hide in deep, shaded water during the heat of the day. They're more actively feeding at night and into the early hours of morning when they can see better. So some of the best fishing is at night or just before dawn, when the skies are clear."

Vail said that Davis Lake in Ferry County and Yocum Lake in Pend Oreille County are producing nice **cutthroat trout**. Summit Lake in Stevens County has nice **rainbow trout** and Elbow Lake just to the west has **eastern brook trout**. Elbow Lake, at just 48 acres, is best suited for float tube or shore fishing. At about 4,300 feet elevation, Big Meadow Lake west of Ione in Pend Oreille County is a good bet for reeling in 12-inch and larger rainbows. The Little Pend Oreille chain of lakes, from Frater and Leo lakes in Pend Oreille County to Heritage, Thomas, Gillette and Sherry lakes in Stevens County, are producing rainbows in the 10-inch range and **tiger trout** up to 14 inches.

Catch-and-release fishing for rainbows up to a pound and a half and 17.5 inches long continues to be good in the evenings and early mornings at Starvation Lake near the Little Pend Oreille Wildlife Refuge southeast of Colville. Vail noted that water temperatures near the bottom of shallow Starvation Lake are over 70 degrees now, so daytime fishing there is a bust. In addition to being catch-and-release only, Starvation has selective gear regulations which includes no motorized boats. Fishing at McDowell Lake, also on the refuge, is slow since milfoil treatment was completed earlier this month. Vail said McDowell will be drawn down soon to prepare for a fishery rehabilitation treatment this fall.

Curlew Lake near Republic in Ferry County continues to produce 10- to 12-inch rainbows and near-state record size **tiger muskies**, which must be at least 36 inches long to keep. Many of the northeast district's fishing lakes within the Colville National Forest have U.S. Forest Service campgrounds and other facilities. For more information see <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/colville/forest/maps/>.

Vail also noted that the Pend Oreille River is producing good catches of large **northern pike**. The river is also a good bet for **largemouth bass**, especially from Ione to Box Canyon Dam, and **smallmouth bass** in the Metaline Falls area. Although not at a high elevation, Waitts Lake in southern Stevens County continues to be a good evening spot to catch rainbows and **brown trout**, plus some

largemouth bass and **yellow perch**. The public access site on Waitts is closed through Aug. 13 for reconstruction work, but three resorts offer access. **Kokanee** at Loon Lake, also in southern Stevens County, is pretty much a "nighttime show," Vail said, not only because of the daytime heat, but Jet Ski and other non-fishing boat traffic disturbance.

[North Central Washington:](#)

Chinook salmon fishing recently opened on the Okanogan River from the Highway 97 Bridge near the mouth to the Highway 97 Bridge just south of Oroville, and on the lower Similkameen River from the mouth upstream to the county road bridge in Oroville. This extension of the ongoing upper Columbia River and lower Okanogan River fishery is due to a strong return of summer chinook, which are stable and not listed under the Endangered Species Act. The daily limit is six chinook salmon, with no more than two adult fish. All coho and sockeye must be released. On the Similkameen River, everything except salmon must be released. Non-buoyant lure restrictions and night closures are in effect for all species on both rivers. The season runs through Sept. 15.

WDFW District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff said the Methow River and tributaries should be good **trout** fishing through August as the water level continues to decline. He reminds anglers that the Twisp and Chewuch river sections, along with the Methow River section from Foghorn Dam to Weeman Bridge, will be closed to fishing starting Aug. 16. The remaining section of the Methow River from Foghorn Dam (near Winthrop) downstream to the Lower Burma Road Bridge (near Methow) will remain open until Sept. 31. "Catch-and-release and selective gear rules apply to these areas and anglers should check the pamphlet carefully because there are sections of each river that are closed to fishing of any kind," he said.

Jateff also noted Okanogan County's Leader Lake is still producing good catches of **bluegill** and **crappie**. "Leader is a good lake for kids," Jateff said. "It has excellent shore access and the fish can be easily caught with a worm and bobber. There's also a good boat launch site for those who want to fish the upper end of the lake where shore access is more limited."

[South Central Washington:](#)

Recent hot weather has been discouraging lowland lake fishing and encouraging anglers to head for the mountains. WDFW Fish Biologist Jim Cummins reports most mountain trails are snow free, except at the very highest elevations. "But bugs are abundant," he said. "So in most areas insect repellent is a necessity." Cummins said alpine lakes should be producing **cutthroat**, **rainbow** and **eastern brook trout** "until the snow flies this fall." For general high lake fishing information and potential hike-in and higher elevation fishing destinations, anglers can look at the "Trout Fishing in High Lakes" publication at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/outreach/fishing/highlake.htm> or the Southcentral region's high lakes recent fish stocking records at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg3/highlakes.pdf>. "Just remember that many lakes have natural reproduction and do not require stocking," he said. "So don't limit your fishing choices to the stocking list alone."

Kokanee anglers should find cooperative fish at Rimrock, Bumping, Keechelus and Kachess reservoirs. Cummins notes that Rimrock and Bumping are producing the best fishing now. "As water temperatures warm, kokanee will drop deeper into the water column," he said. "Successful anglers will troll, either using downriggers or one to two ounces of lead. Fish will likely be 20 to 40 feet deep."

Rivers and streams have finally dropped down to summer low flows and should be producing **rainbow**, **cutthroat** and **eastern brook trout**. WDFW Regional Habitat Program Manager Perry Harvester notes that some streams with glacial headwaters, like the upper Cowlitz, White, and Klickitat, will be turbid and un-fishable for a while longer, due to heavy glacial till from snow melt. Many rivers and streams are managed with low catch limits and under selective gear rules. **Bull trout** and **salmon** are off limits and must be released if caught. Some areas are closed to protect bull trout. Anglers should review fishing regulations before fishing.

Reader Email

A subscriber wrote this week to ask exactly where Section 5 on the Rogue River is located as it has been on the schedule to be planted with trout every week recently. TGF was unable to ferret out this information. Readers?

Got a story to tell or information to share? Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: SailCat@SailCat.com

Random Links



Big salmon story (requires free registration):

http://www.peninsulaclarion.com/stories/072706/news_0727new001.shtml

PGE Biologist talks about the Faraday facility on the Clackamas River (video):

http://www.portlandgeneral.com/community_and_env/hydropower_and_fish/clackamas/videos/fish_video_high.wmv

Seasonal Map Redux - Lower Siletz Fishing:

<http://www.oregonh2o.com/images/mapsiletz.jpg>

PacifiCorp may agree to removing dams:

<http://www.oregonlive.com/search/index.ssf?/base/business/1154571923224580.xml?oregonian?fng&coll=7>

Weekly Quote – "The fisherman sets the highest value on those fish which have made the highest demand on his personal prowess, his knowledge of nature, his watercraft and his skill." - Arthur Ransome

GOOD LUCK!